

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15  
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2582  
INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUBUMBASHI 0956

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: EMIN, CG  
SUBJECT: GECAMINES JULY PRODUCTION FIGURES

REF: LUBUMBASHI 0818

1. SUMMARY: GECAMINES OFFICIAL FIGURES SHOW  
PRODUCTION OF 33,600 MT OF COPPER AND 1200 MT OF CO-  
BALT FOR THE MONTH OF JULY. CONTINUED HIGH PRODUCTION SHOWS TO  
ZAIRIAN OFFICIALS THAT LARGE NUMBER OF EXPATRIATES NOT  
NEEDED, BUT TO EXPATRIATES INDICATES ONLY THAT DIFFICULTIES  
EXPECTED FROM INADEQUATE MAINTENANCE IN KOLWEZI LIE AHEAD  
AND HAVE NOT YET HAD IMPACT. END SUMMARY.

2. COPPER. GCM OFFICIALS FIGURES FOR MONTH OF JULY SHOW  
COPPER PRODUCTION OF 33,600 MT AND TOTAL PRODUCTION FOR FIRST  
SEVEN MONTHS OF 1978 AT 232,600 MT.

3. COBALT. SAME OFFICIAL FIGURES FOR COBALT PRODUCTION IN  
JULY SHOW OUTPUT OF 1200 MT FOR FIRST SEVEN MONTH TOTAL OF  
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7,200 MT. GCM ADMINISTRATOR-DIRECTOR CHARLES PICQUET EX-  
PLAINED THAT HIGH POST-KOLWEZI COBALT PRODUCTION FIGURE IS  
DUE TO EFFORTS TO PLACE GREATER EMPHASIS ON COBALT WHICH  
BEGAN EARLIER THIS YEAR. IN ADDITION TO TRYING TO CURB  
COBALT LOSSES FROM METALLURGICAL PROCESS (WHICH HAVE  
HAD BETTER SUCCESS AT LIKASI PLANT WHERE EXPATRIATE  
PRESENCE CONTINUES THAN AT KOLWEZI PLANT WHERE EXPATRIATES

HAVE NOT BEEN ALLOWED TO RETURN) GCM HAS EXCEEDED EXPECTED LEVELS BY PROCESSING COBALT FROM SEMI-PROCESSED ORES WHICH WERE STOCKPILED AT KOLWEZI. PICQUET SAID THESE SEMI-PROCESSED ORES WERE ABOUT 10 PERCENT PURE AND WOULD YIELD 4-6,000 MT OF COBALT.

4. GCM NOW OFFICIALLY ESTIMATES THAT OPTIMUM ANNUAL PRODUCTION FOR 1978 MIGHT REACH 380,000 MT OF COPPER AND 12,000 MT OF COBALT.

5. COMMENT. ALL SOURCES INDICATE THAT PRODUCTION OF BOTH COPPER AND COBALT HAS CONTINUED TO CLIMB FROM MAY AND JUNE (REFTEL) TO UNEXPECTED HIGH LEVELS FOR MONTH OF JULY. ZAIRIAN OFFICIALS ARE REASONABLY OPTIMISTIC THAT PRODUCTION LEVEL FOR NEXT FIVE MONTHS CAN AVERAGE 30,000 MT NECESSARY TO MEET GOALS. ZAIRIANS LOOK TO RECENT PRODUCTION FIGURES AS PROOF THAT LARGE EXPATRIATE COMMUNITY DIRECTING KOLWEZI OPERATIONS IS NOT ESSENTIAL FOR GCM PRODUCTION. SENIOR EXPATRIATES ON THE OTHER HAND EXPECT PRODUCTION TO BEGIN TO FALL OFF DURING MONTH OF AUGUST AND TO CONTINUE TO DECLINE FOR REST OF YEAR BECAUSE OF INADEQUATE PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE DURING RECENT MONTHS AND LACK OF EXPERIENCE AMONG ZAIRIAN STAFF WHICH IS RUNNING THE SOPHISTICATED KOLWEZI FACILITIES.

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## Message Attributes

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